Damage to Railway Property During Bihar Bund

5150. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any damage to the Railway property was caused during the bund organised in Bihar to protest against swearing in of the NDA Government in the State in March, 2000;

(b) whether any estimate has been made of the amount of loss suffered by Railways as result thereof;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any action has been taken or is proposed to be taken against the persons reponsible for the loss; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Railway property worth Rs. 299 Lakhs and Rs. 68,60,942/- was damaged in Eastern and North Eastern Railway respectively.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Civil police and GRP have registered cases against the persons responsible for the loss under various section of IPC and the Railway Act, Five cases have been registered in the jurisdiction of North Eastern Railway.

Generating More Revenue for Railways

5151. SHR NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that government have advanced Rs. 35,000 crores to the Railways on a nominal interest of only 4.2 per cent, while borrowing at 11 per cent, thus giving an implicit subsidy of Rs, 2,400 crores annually;

(b) if so, what are the plans of the Railways to generate its own resources so as not to depend on this subsidy; and

(c) whether Railways would be generating more revenue or reducing expenditure to bridge this gap?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Central Government's investment in

Railways up to 31.3.2001 (Budget Estimates) is Rs. 35,634 cr. Out of this, the Capital-at-charge, on which dividend is payable, is Rs. 32,500.47 cr. after excluding the dividend-free Captial on the Metropolitan Transport Projects. Railways currently pay dividend at the rate of 7% to Government in accordance with the recommendations of the Railway Convention Committee of Parliament. Certain reliefs in payment of dividend, commonly referred to and exhibited as subsidy, are also available, mainly on the capital invested in Northeast region, uneconomic branch lines, strategic lines and certain other new lines taken up on other than financial consideration. In 2000-01 (BE), the dividend payable to Government and the explicit subsidy thereon comes to Rs. 2115 cr and Rs. 795 cr, respectively. This element of subsidy does reduce the effective rate of dividend charged to the Railways. It is based upon a consideration of the nature of certain Railway investments, of which some cannot generate commercial returns or are loss-making. In making such investments and maintaining such operations, Railways serve a social purpose without being entirely commercial in approach. However, in order to strengthen their financial position for raising their capacity for investments on modernisation, safety, passenger amenities, replacements and renewals etc., Railways have undertaken various measures as detailed in (c) below.

(c) Railways are taking steps to both control expenditure and increase revenues. Measures to control expenditure by improving staff productivity, assets utilisation, inventory management, fuel consumption, austerity in areas such as travel, publicity, hospitality etc. are being implemented. In earnings, healthy growth is expected from the improved economic scenario & aggressive marketing with improved freight services & commercial incentives. Non-traditional sources of revenue such as leasing of railways' right of way for Optic Fibre Cable communication, commercial utilisation of railway land and air space, advertising rights at stations and on rolling stock etc. are also expected to contribute to improve the earnings. Besides, all efforts are being made to curb leakage of revenue and pilferages.

Trains on Unremunerative Routes

5152. SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA:
DR. D. MASTHAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways have to run trains on various unremunerative routes too;